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ABSTRACT

Home study has enjoyed a slow but steady growth in popularity and acceptance. The growth of independent home study may be attributed to both the realities of the present educational environment and the consistently positive results of the home study method. At least one researcher has suggested that the initially slow growth of home study may have been due to institutionalized inertia by traditional educators. In recent years, however, such factors as the reexamination of traditional educational methods, concerns over increasing costs, and recognition of the need for the education and training of persons living in areas that are remote from school and campus sites and for persons who have already entered the work force, have made home study more attractive as an educational option. In the United States and abroad, increasing numbers of educators, government and military leaders, and business managers are coming to appreciate the flexibility, adaptability, effectiveness, and economy afforded by home study. It is estimated that more than 150 external degree programs are currently being offered by universities and state associations in the United States. Distance education programs have even been established at the doctoral level. Both Australia and New Zealand have been actively pursuing home study programs, and West Germany has established a central office for monitoring correspondence education throughout the country. In Asia, Africa, and the Americas, home study has been accepted by a broad array of countries, ranging from the most developed to nations that are just now developing. (MN)

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EFFECTIVENESS OF HOME STUDY

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Preface

The present paper was used as a point of departure for Effectiveness and Acceptance of Home Study by Leonard Valore, National Education Corporation, and Grover Diehl, USAF Extension Course Institute, published as a monograph by the National Home Study Council in 1987.

EFFECTIVENESS OF HOME STUDY

There is current a number of flippant "witticisms" about independent home study which color the perceptions of many people, even of many leading traditional educators who should know better. Representative of such old saws is the one about "getting a diploma in brain surgery by correspondence". But the old saw had better start looking over its shoulder. Several journals in the field of medical education have reported favorably on correspondence education currently practiced in the areas of medicine, nursing, and pharmacology; and several other professions could equally be cited.

A far cry from its nineteenth-century beginnings in this country as a spinoff of the Chautauqua circuit, independent home study has clearly come of age. It is currently a robust enterprise which not only serves needs not met by traditional education, but also promises to rival and perhaps supplant traditional education in many functional areas.

As the Chautauqua reference indicates, independent home study is by no means a recent phenomenon. There is, in fact, lively debate among home study educators as to whether the United States, in 1728, or Sweden, in 1833, was the first to offer correspondence study.[1] Certainly the University of South Africa, with an unbroken history of over 100 years, can lay good claim to be the oldest bona fide correspondence school in continuous operation.[2] And even the Wright Brothers dabbled in instruction via correspondence.[3]

As published research makes abundantly clear, home study has consistently been used effectively over a wide range of subjects, in almost every conceivable environment, in sometimes totally unexpected locations. Just three representative examples: From the late 1920's to the early 30's, Fritz

Reinhardt's correspondence course had astounding success in training over 6000 speakers for the National Socialist German Workers' Party.[4] In the latter stages of World War II, largely through the good offices of the War Prisoners Aid of the YMCA, American prisoners of war took correspondence courses! In 1981, the vital importance of structured independent self-study was cited in reference to Great Britain's Open University, a correspondence institution whose enrollment is preponderantly urban students with easy geographic access to traditional resident institutions![5]

The substance of what has been said so far was largely available in Dr. Charles B. Marshall's 1976 monograph on the effectiveness of home study.[6] While Marshall's paper amply demonstrated the value of correspondence study, much research has appeared in the interim. The research indicates that correspondence study responds effectively to a broad range of needs throughout the world and has earned recognition and support on an international scale from both government and the private sector. The purpose of this paper, then, is to bring Marshall's monograph up to date, to indicate the continuing growth of independent home study worldwide and in an increasing variety of areas, and to emphasize the increasing incidence of cases in which—in preference to going to school—people are sending for it.

RESEARCH STUDIES

When asked in June 1984 to list all sources referenced "correspondence study," the ERIC file provided 409 citations.[7] The titles in the listing showed more and more that home study was gaining momentum in the traditional educational sector as well as continuing to be the major component of extension education. In addition, the frequency and quality of home-study oriented presentations at international research symposia demonstrated that it was an area of significant

instructional interest which could no longer be dismissed as an inferior or "substitute" medium.[8] The pertinent ERIC research data dealt with three main issues: instances where there was no alternative to study at home("Filling the Gaps"); studies comparing instruction at home with some other method ("Comparative Studies"); and situational analyses of the home study method in action ("Situational Studies").

Filling the Gaps

Technological Remoteness. Typically, developing nations are faced with massive education and training problems and yet are simultaneously beset with weak, limited economies and underdeveloped technologies. Zambia was a case in point with two studies illustrating the problems of conventional education and detailing higher education's role in relieving the problems by widening its student/subject base via home based continuing education.[9] Having to "make do," however, was not limited to newly developing nations. India reported nearly identical problems of increasingly limited finances and a need to stretch existing resources.[10] Further, even the affluent industrialized countries have turned to home study when times became difficult, as occurred in Canada during the 1930's. Correspondence courses were used as one means to help people cope with the distress and demoralization resulting from the Depression.[11]

Geographic Isolation. In addition to technological remoteness, there remain many areas—even in industrialized countries—which are geographically remote. Alaska and Australia were among the most advanced of the sparsely populated regions, but Canada and Mexico reported almost identical problems of providing educational services to outlying areas.

In Australia, the Katherine School of the Air used a mix of media including correspondence study to provide an educational program to isolated children.[12] The success of this and other allied programs was mixed, but the problems seemed to be more trying to do too much with a single device rather than with some inherent flaw in the medium.[13] Tomlinson and Tarnof reported that student variations such as rural versus urban, normal versus handicapped, and so on, emphasized the difficulty of mounting a national program which seeks uniform benefits with standardized methods while at the same time emphasizing individual oppportunity.[14]

Closer to home, Alaska has had particular success in using home study to reach children, pipeline workers, American Indians and Alaskan natives.[15] The title of one of the papers in this series, "Teacher, the Bears Won't Let Me Study", suggested some of the unusual circumstances encountered in Alaskan education.[16]

Partly due, perhaps, to their traditions of a high level of state support of distance education, Australia and Alaska had the most extensive literature on organized home study. Canada and Mexico, however, reported similar programs.[17] While the geographic characteristics of these countries intuitively lent themselves to home study, "wide open spaces" were not a prerequisite for isolation. The United States, Scotland, Portugal, Norway, New Zealand, and Finland reported isolation as an important educational issue and cited home study as a useful innovation.[18]

Nomadic Students. Population density, or lack thereof, is not the only source of isolation, however. Students can be isolated if they move from one school or district to another too frequently to follow a unified curriculum. Migrant students were clear examples of this point. Noting that the variation

in requirements for graduation found in the public high schools was a serious problem for migrant students and greatly diminished their chances for high school graduation, California developed the Portable Assisted Study Sequence (PASS), which provided correspondence study keyed to graduation requirements. Subsequent evaluation demonstrated that the program was functioning effectively.[19] PASS was also a feature of Oregon's secondary education program for migrant students.[20]

Curriculum Enrichment. Using correspondence study to expand the education of migrant students generalizes into more traditional areas, both to enrich existing school curricula and to avoid expensive consolidation. Since the single student is the basic unit of correspondence instruction, the method is considerably more flexible than when the unit is an entire classroom. For example, Liberty High School in Washington State has used purchased correspondence courses for curriculum enrichment and as an inducement to improve student performance. Not only have these purposes been met, but the program has fostered more positive student attitudes and improved attendance.[21] Beyond this, McAfee, writing in School Management, argued that creative use of correspondence courses offered a viable alternative to district consolidation, and that home study was an educationally sound and economically feasible method of increasing student opportunities for both academic and vocational training.[22] Correspondence study has been demonstrated to be a more popular learning medium than other alternatives such as television, radio, or newspaper.[23]

Disabled Students. There remains a small but important number of students who experience varying degrees of isolation due to personal limitation—the physically handicapped, students unresponsive to traditional instruction, and adults with limiting responsibilities—all of whom may be reached by

correspondence study at home. Parent-infant pre-school programs for deaf children have been effective, especially when student density did not support a resident instructor.[24] B'nai B'rith has published a list of home study opportunities for the home-bound.[25] A British study found that traditionally marginal students responded favorably to the home study format of the Open University.[26] A second study from England and a study from the United States arrived at a similar conclusion--outreach programs including correspondence, evening residence courses, independent study, etc., were effective means to reach students not ordinarily reached through traditional programs.[27] Finally, a study from Canada illustrated that home study not only opened up education to adults generally, but many of those taking advantage of the liberalization of opportunity were from urban areas and did so despite ready access to traditional instructional forms.[28]

Political. Finally there is the notion of using home study to meet socio-political objectives. The case of Fritz Reinhardt and his program for National Socialist speakers was mentioned earlier. More recently, both Soviet and Chinese education have employed the method to further ideological objectives. One major concern for the Soviets was the need for various economic sectors to meet increasing demand. Evening and correspondence courses were directed toward meeting these economic needs and toward meeting the popular demands of the people for education.[29] The Peoples' Republic of China used a correspondence course combining political theory and social investigation in an attempt to improve the political socialization of rural youth.[30] The need for and further development of correspondence courses in China's rural areas was also demonstrated.[31]

Comparative Studies

Most readers will immediately assume "comparative" means the comparison of correspondence instruction with traditional residence instruction. This assumption should be qualified, however, in two regards. First, comparison implies a far broader category of contrasts than just correspondence versus residence. Second, direct comparative studies are frequently impossible since curricula are seldom parallel. The approach we wish to use here for the review of comparative studies is to attempt to form a judgment as to whether similar instructional schemes are equally successful in meeting common educational objectives and whether certain advantages accrue to one method or the other.

Pro. In most respects home study and correspondence education has compared favorably with other methods of providing adult and continuing education. In an Australian program relying heavily on correspondence instruction, Briody reported improved reading ability in six of 12 children with learning difficulties. Reactions to the program were positive, and it was recommended that increased teacher-parent-student contact be encouraged.[32] A cost/benefit study of correspondence versus residence instruction in Canada concluded that at discount rates above eight percent, high school by correspondence was less costly, but that the cost/benefit model was sensitive to variations in completion rates and instructional costs. Advantages were also demonstrated in the areas of staff utilization, student motivation and feedback, instructional quality, and achievement.[33] In a comparison of computer generated feedback against traditional home study feedback, Baath found that students receiving computerized remarks had accelerated submission rates and that computerization did not adversely affect completion rates.[34]

In the area of sex education, correspondence instruction was shown to be as effective as traditional modes for both sexes, for both college age and older persons, and for students in rural and remote areas.[35] Using home study to achieve socially desirable objectives has also been demonstrated in Soviet education.[36]

Con. There is, however, evidence that home study has failed to perform as expected. Montgomerie reported that no significant differences were found between correspondence, traditional, and computer based distance instruction, although completion rates were higher for the last than for the first two. Generally correspondence students did better than traditional students on post-tests, but the higher dropout rate for the former and other methodological limitations reduced confidence in this finding.[37] Walsh et al. found that summer at-home remedial reading instruction resulted in no measurable improvement in children's reading ability. The parents were, however, highly enthusiastic and desired the program's continuation.[38] Gage and Coladarci, studying home based inservice teacher training versus no training, failed to find any difference in post-test behaviors but noted that the program may have been too limited. They believed that more extensive instruction and comprehensive materials could have easily altered the outcome.[39] There was also a 1976 study by Nafziger which found that very few independent study courses actually led to the recognition of achievement through the award of a certificate, license, or academic degree.[40]

Analysis. Patently, the comparative effectiveness of structured at home self-study via correspondence versus formal resident instruction and other forms of extension education remains something of an open question. Much depends upon operational considerations which may only be indirectly connected with the

instructional components of a course. It is clear, however, that correspondence study is not inherently less effective than other forms. Further, it has the advantages of increased flexibility and often less cost. The relative inflexibility of many forms of extension instruction was examined in detail in a 1981 paper by Muzzin. In an excellent summary of progress and problems in extension education, she found little evidence that advanced technology actually improved program quality. Many of the difficulties encountered, however, may have been due to resistance by conventional institutions. There was support for the notion that the application of technology in higher education was most promising in the areas of correspondence study and off-campus centers.[41] The flexibility of correspondence study was also cited by Hurst, who argued that the lack of success of educational broadcasting in some developing countries was due to its inflexibility, and that correspondence study through tape distribution centers was one means of reducing the problem.[42]

Summary. The answer to the question "which mode of instruction is better" remains, then, equivocal. In some cases there is no alternative to home study; therefore comparative research is not possible. Elsewhere, a single correspondence course attempts to reach an audience formerly served by several resident courses, with disappointing results. Or, comparative research is conducted with methodological limitations. Perhaps a more workable question would be "Are the expectations of the course reasonable, and have the students achieved the desired level of performance?" When viewed from this perspective, the evidence is strongly supportive of home study--not as a substitute, but as an alternative.

Situational Studies

There are other examples of the effectiveness of home study along the pragmatic lines described above besides comparative studies and unmet needs. Evans described an inservice education correspondence course on leadership development in vocational education which was offered by the University of Illinois. When used as group study and with invited guidance and administrative personnel, the course was very effective.[43] The principle of delivering conventional subjects through distance education has been institutionalized with effective results in organizations such as England's Open University.[44] Blank, using a pre-test/post-test design, found a significant increase in cognitive knowledge and strong student approval for an audio-cassette continuing education course in pharmacology.[45] A study in Finland demonstrated that increased life expectancy was positively associated with the availability of programs targeted on those nearing or in retirement.[46] The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service provides a program in parenthood education which includes mini-courses, correspondence education, and a newsletter. The program was associated with a decrease in teenage pregnancy in 11 of the 13 counties in which the program operated.[47] Wagoner, cited earlier in connection with using correspondence courses to provide high school instruction in limited interest subjects, noted that there were no school dropouts during the course of the project.[48] Laverenz found that students taking correspondence courses from nine Midwestern and Southeastern universities were generally satisfied with teacher-student communication, rated their courses very good for academic quality, and were willing to take other independent study courses.[49] In a control group

experiment, Dyson found improved post-test performance for a group of 35 elementary school students receiving remedial reading instruction via correspondence.[50] Brookfield reported that a university correspondence course in rural England unexpectedly drew a large share of its students from urban areas with relatively easy access to traditional instruction.[51]

Perhaps the most unexpected finding of at-home versus resident instruction, however, is the institutionalized student centeredness of the former. Resident institutions contain numerous student support programs which are usually taken for granted—residence halls, libraries, student unions, and so on. Only infrequently, however, are these directly connected to curricula, and very often instruction is decidedly instructor centered. In home study, by contrast, the instructor must assume that the student has only that which he or she is directly provided. As a result, home study institutions often have extensive student support staffs and are very sensitive to student criticism.

In the United States, this may be due to many home study institutions being private schools operated for profit. In contrast to resident students, who pay full tuition "up front", home study students pay as they go on a month to month basis; consequently, they have a very effective means of expressing their displeasure with poor service: they simply send a cancellation instead of a check. Management knows that poor service means dropouts, and therefore puts major emphasis on student support and good responsive service as an adjunct to the effective instruction which the student has a right to expect.

The profit motive, however, is not the only reason for the student centered nature of home study programs. As noted by Lewis, it may also have much to do with at-home students often being demographically different from traditional students and requiring specific counseling to complete courses successfully.[52]

Perraton noted a similar kind of individual attention in developing countries where the tutor's direct instructional role was limited. In those cases tutors tended to concentrate on dialogue with the students and then, in turn, communicate their educational needs to system developers.[53] Baltzer noted that operational support to students in community college extension programs was probably the most underrated factor in implementing alternative delivery systems. Students enrolled in alternative delivery courses and the faculty teaching those courses required much more than did teachers and students in the classroom.[54] In a second paper, the same author noted that reasons for not using effective communication media included the standard ones of costs and opposition to change as well as a lack of understanding on the part of senior management as to exactly what the students needed and wanted.[55] Other sources might be cited to document the necessity of formally integrating student services and feedback into extension instruction.[56] Generally, when management was extension centered, success followed. Conversely, when management came to extension education with the preconceptions of resident instruction, problems in implementing the program and achieving student satisfaction followed.

Summary

It is clear that home study has demonstrated its effectiveness in meeting expectations. Indeed, many more titles could have been cited. A direct reading of the ERIC abstract files quickly discloses that home study is solidly established as a viable alternative avenue for learning that is capable of adaptation to widely varying circumstances and environments, and sufficiently flexible to achieve any of a broad spectrum of educational objectives.

ORGANIZATIONAL ACCEPTANCE IN THE USA

Perhaps the most telling endorsement of home study is the degree to which business and industry have accepted it as a viable training activity. Miller, in the Training and Development Journal, noted that correspondence education was a tested, flexible, and viable addition to the training and development arsenal of learning tools.[57] Lambert, an official with the National Home Study Council, has prepared a primer on home study which appeared in a later issue of the same journal.[58] The extent to which organizations have adopted the method may be shown in a number of examples.

Trades and Professions

The trades, industry, and occupations were among the most aggressive to accept home study. Activities in which home study programs have been developed included dairying, librarianship, music, railroads, teaching, sales and salesmanship, and transportation.[59] Over forty trade associations sponsor correspondence study departments in such fields as hotel/motel management, yacht design, jewelery-making, medical record maintenance, banking, etc. In Alaska, the centralized high school correspondence program included a number of trades related courses, including livestock raising, engine repair, taxidermy and tanning, salmon aquaculture, and computer skills.[60] The professions have also been developing home study programs, primarily for inservice training, in engineering, environmental science, gerontology, medicine, nursing, pharmacology, and police science.[61]

Public Service

The U.S. government is the single largest provider of home study in America. Government and military agencies sponsor an amazing variety of home study programs. The Air Force Extension Course Institute, for example, offered over 350 courses in professional military education and career development in 1984 and processed about 350,000 enrollments.[62]. The Marine Corps Institute and the U.S. Army Institute for Professional Development are also extremely large and offer a wide variety of courses. The Navy and Coast Guard have similar programs on a slightly smaller scale. Because these are such large programs with highly similar interests, the military services hold a yearly conference, the Interservice Correspondence Exchange, during which they share experiences and develop projects of mutual interest.[63] Other federal agencies providing home study include the Federal Emergency Management Administration, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Office of Personnel Management. The subjects taught by the federal home study activities have included pest management and environmental quality, wastewater management, management and supervision, citizenship for naturalization purposes, and, of course, the full range of occupational specialties found in the military services.[64]

United States

Formal recognition of home study is now regularly coming from resident colleges and universities. The National University Continuing Education Association includes educators from colleges and universities around the country and focuses on extension programs and meeting the needs of the non-traditional learner. There are also many examples of post-secondary institutional involvement in offering both degree and non-degree programs via home study. Baltzer, writing in the Community and Junior College Journal, described a number of telecommunications delivery systems which could be adapted to distance education.[65]. Colleges and universities have increasingly been adapting traditional course offerings to the home study format. For example, Cornell University offered courses in environmental studies and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte reported using correspondence study in an on-the-job training program for its own physical plant workers.[66] There are currently more than 150 external degree programs offered by universities and state associations.[67] Distance education programs have even found their way into doctoral level studies.[68]

International

University level instruction on the college level, perhaps in part because it is largely state funded, is even more popular overseas. Australia, Quebec,

Great Britain, India, Kenya, and Nigeria provide evidence of the acceptance of post-secondary instruction via correspondence.[69] There is also a network of resource- and expertise-sharing among nations. The interest of UNESCO in home study has been widely noted. The Federal Republic of Germany, in an independent international effort, has cooperated with Kenya in developing a post-graduate program in curriculum development.[70] Both the British and the West Germans have developed independent national universities to provide college level home study, the Open University and the Fernuniversitat, respectively.

GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION

United States

Formal recognition of correspondence study by federal and state governments in the United States goes back to 1883, when the State of New York authorized the Chatauqua Institute to award degrees in its home study program. Various state-chartered institutions and land grant universities launched correspondence study departments at the turn of the century. In 1920, with generous help from International Correspondence Schools, one of the earliest of the military correspondence schools was established, the U.S. Marine Corps Institute.

On the federal level, formal government recognition of private home study came in 1936, when the U.S. Federal Trade Commission adopted a series of Trade Practice Rules formulated by the National Home Study Council (NHSC). Since 1936, federal reliance on the work of the NHSC has steadily increased.

Following World War II, home study institutions were included in the new G.I. Bill of Rights. Subsequent G.I. Bills have given specific recognition to

NHSC accredited schools. Under the Vietnam Era G.I. Bill, over 1.1 million veterans (20% of the total) elected to use their education benefits for a home study program.

The U.S.Commissioner of Education formally recognized the Accrediting Commission of the NHSC in 1959 as a "nationally recognized accrediting agency". This recognition was re-affirmed in 1970, 1974, and 1981. In 1985, the NHSC Accrediting Commission's scope of recognition expanded to include "academic degree programs by home study from the associates through the masters degree levels", a historic achievement for a field long associated with a degree mill stigma.

Federal government reliance on and recognition of correspondence study takes on many forms: for employment and hiring purposes in the civil service system; home study high school diploma recognition for armed forces personnel; tuition reimbursement programs such as the Department of Navy program; and eligibility under various government student tuition aid programs such as the Guaranteed Student Loan Program. Today, in fact, the U.S. government's home study institutes, both military and non-military, enroll over 2 million students annually. These institutes include those operated by the military as well as those of the various government agencies such as the Office of Personnel Management and the Defense Security Institute.

International

Recognition of home study overseas is even more firmly established, and more effectively aided throuh supportive legislation, than it is in the U.S. The West Germans, for example, have established a central office for monitoring

education via correspondence, the Staatliche Zentralstelle fur den Fernunterricht.[71] UNESCO conducted a survey to study regulations and legislation regarding correspondence in five countries and recommended guidelines for developing countries.[72] The UNESCO project surveyed the Federal Republic of Germany, the U.S., Great Britain, India, and France. Denmark, in 1980, enacted the Leisure-Time Education Consolidation Act which consolidated two earlier laws and resulted in a comprehensive program of correspondence instruction.[73] Given the availability and long history of traditional residence instruction in their nations, it is remarkable that such densely populated countries as the Federal Repbulic of Germany, Great Britain, and Denmark have taken the lead in home study legislation.

INTERNATIONAL ACCEPTANCE

Home study, both within and outside of the United States, enjoys considerable academic regard, government approval, and popular acceptance. What was for a long time--at least in the U.S.--misperceived in the common public mind as an inferior substitute for "the real thing" has long since established itself here and abroad as a viable alternative and frequently a preferable choice to traditional instruction. This final section will just skim the globe, citing only a few of projects here and there, to give something of an overview of the scope, variety, and acceptance of home study in an international perspective.

Perhaps the central paper in the analysis of international acceptance was Borje Holmberg's second revision of Status and Trends of Distance Education.[74]. This extraordinarily well documented work discussed the various aspects of

distance education and illuminated the present status and important trends. Holmberg has also just finished a preliminary report on the status of distance education in the world in the 1980s with the full report to be available shortly.[75] While Holmberg's publications should be required reading for every serious analyst of home study, what follows here does not draw draw on the sources in his extensive bibliographies; rather, to maintain the scale of the rest of this paper, it continues to draw only from sources in the ERIC files listed in the cited 1984 search.

Australia and Environs

The significant involvement of Australian educational authorities has been amply demonstrated elsewhere via their large contribution to the research literature. To those sources already cited, we should add the papers and proceedings of the Australian National Workshop on Distance Education, the Priority Country Area Program, efforts in rural pre-school education, and the Queensland itinerant teacher service which reaches remote and rural students.[76]

In addition to Australia, New Zealand has been actively pursuing home study programs. One paper by McVeagh focused on how that country used media in the delivery of correspondence study.[77] A second paper, published in Educational Horizons, examined the correspondence school system and the ways it enhanced the educational system.[78]

Pacific and Indian Ocean Areas

As with Australia, the value of home study to India and vicinity island nations was demonstrated earlier; the references cited here are simply additional examples.

In India an article by Yadav and others examined the role of home study in developing nations and offered suggestions for increasing effectiveness and creating community involvement.[79] Another Indian paper by Sharma discussed an educational project in which correspondence education was used to reach academically deficient students.[80] Dodds described an experimental program in Mauritius which explored the potential for teaching at a distance through a variety of extension media supplemented by occasional in-person tutorials.[81] Elton and Gaye describe a variety of ways to train academic staff at the University of Malaysia, and use those experiences to guide staff training in other countries in the region.[82] The December 1980 issue of Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education Courier Service described a Thai radio correspondence project, and the Asian Center of Educational Innovation for Development cited 14 innovative educational programs which have been implemented in Malaysia, Korea, India, Japan, and Australia.[83] Projects reported by the Center included radio, television, and correspondence programs.

Asia

Programs in Korea and Japan were noted in connection with the Asian Center of Educational Innovation and Development paper cited above. It also found a

program of experimental correspondence courses for youth resettled in China, a historical paper on the development of correspondence education in Turkey, a radio/correspondence high school course of study for adolescents and employed adults in South Korea, a paper by Lwin on how Burma integrated correspondence study into a national educational policy, and a detailed paper on Everyman's University, and a non-traditional university in Israel offering postsecondary education via extension to a non-traditional college population.[84] A paper by Pereira, in Convergence, examined correspondence education in Asia from a more general perspective.[85]

Africa

The acceptance of home study in Africa was demonstrated in a number of countries ranging from the most modern, such as South Africa, to impoverished Third World countries such as Lesoto and Botswana. Yule described the use of microteaching at a distance university as an evaluation method in teacher training.[86] Mauma examined and evaluated the correspondence education system in Tanzania, which emphasized non-certification and job oriented courses.[87] Malawi stretched limited resources by incorporating correspondence study into a program for rural development personnel, concentrating on improving their background educational and communication skills.[88] In another instance of conserving resources, Swaziland, Lesoto and Botswana cooperated by accepting a single correspondence course for common use in all three countries. This effort had implications for production of other correspondence materials as well as for the organization of correspondence courses generally.[89] A UNESCO paper, Educational Reforms and Innovations in Africa, presented nine case studies from a number of

East African countries including Senegal, Mali, Tanzania, Benin, Togo, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya. The concept of correspondence study figured prominently in the presentations.[90]

Europe

As might be expected, England, with its Open University and as the home of the Bulletin of the International Council for Distance Education, is a center of home study activity. The interest in home study, however, is plainly evident throughout the entire continent. To a greater or lesser extent, every European nation from east to west relies on home study.

Articles from the Soviet Union have already been mentioned. Another in the same series was "Soviet Secondary Specialized Education," which examined the role and structure of the Soviet secondary technical education system in light of rapidly changing economic conditions. As before, at-home study figured prominently in the discussions.[91] Also from the Eastern Block, a paper from the Democratic Republic of Germany described correspondence study as it functioned in that socialist society.[92] Barcikowska described an experiment using television to enhance Poland's out-of-school secondary level agricultural courses, often called correspondence secondary schools.[93] A paper in Adult Education in Finland discussed the report of the Open University Committee which proposed the promotion of the open university learning experience throughout that country. Program emphasis would be on adapting university level distance studies to adults via correspondence, radio, and television.[94] The level of interest shown by Finland in home study was shown also in a paper by Alanen, which discussed the private and state correspondence institutes in Finland, and

a research report on the use of home based language instruction packages using portable cassette tape recorders.[95] Sweden used distance educational studies consisting of correspondence courses with additional study guides and booklists as one of three forms of distance teaching in higher education.[96] Norway, following the lead of a number of other countries, has developed an institute for distance education, Norsk Fjernundervisning.[97] Finally, England has been cited as a leader in distance education, not only in the more conventional educational areas but in such areas as trade union education as well.[98] The history and progress of home study in England was claimed by Elliott to result from the popularity of the written examination as a selection method, the growth of professional bodies, and the spread of professional journals.[99] Curzon, writing in Comparative Education and along a similar line of examination, discussed the advantages of correspondence education in England and the Netherlands.[100]

The Americas

The contributions to and interest in home study by Canada, Mexico, and the United States are quite obvious, of course, but it is worth noting at this point that other countries in the Americas have also pursued home study as a matter of educational policy. Peru, for example, used distance education to improve teaching education as part of the educational reform which began in 1970. Within the Peruvian context, distance education included correspondence courses, radio, and television.[101] Padron described a school in Venezuela which provided non-credit classes and correspondence study to increase Venezuela's skilled work force.[102] Brazil also reported interest in home study.[103]

Among the ERIC files, though, the majority of the literature is from English-speaking North American sources, predominantly the United States. By way of adding to the supportive literature already mentioned, the following may be cited. Barker and Peterson surveyed 319 small rural high schools and and found that 25 percent of the counselors frequently recommended correspondence courses.[104] A similar conclusion was drawn by Nimnicht and Partridge in a smaller study.[105] Finally, Changing Times magazine concluded that the increasing flexibility of curricula created a natural environment for the pursuit of home study programs.[106]

SUMMARY

Home study has enjoyed a slow but steady development leading to its current state of accelerating popularity and acceptance. This growth is based both on the realities of the present educational environment and the consistently positive results of the method. As suggested by Dunkel in Adult Education, the slowness of the initial growth may have been due to institutionalized inertia by traditional educators.[107] In recent years, however, the re-examination of traditional methods, the concern with increasing costs, the recognition of the need for education and training to continue beyond the walls of a campus and beyond the entry into working life—all these and many other considerations have led educators, government and military leaders, business managers seeking training that will not interefere with production, and virtually anyone with a new and unique need for education or training to look anew at the flexibility, adaptability, effectiveness, and economy of home study.

The success of enterprises such as England's Open University, totally

extramural degree programs in Europe and the Americas, continuing education and training in the trades and professions, and the successful experience of the military in enlisted career training and professional military education for military leaders, all of these successful uses of distance education have put the educational community on notice that not only the content but the delivery of instruction will be different in the future.[108] As Lambert observed in in College Board Review, home study typically offers individual instruction, relatively modest cost, easy accessibility, and practical specialization.[109] To his assessment we may now add—and proven effectiveness.

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